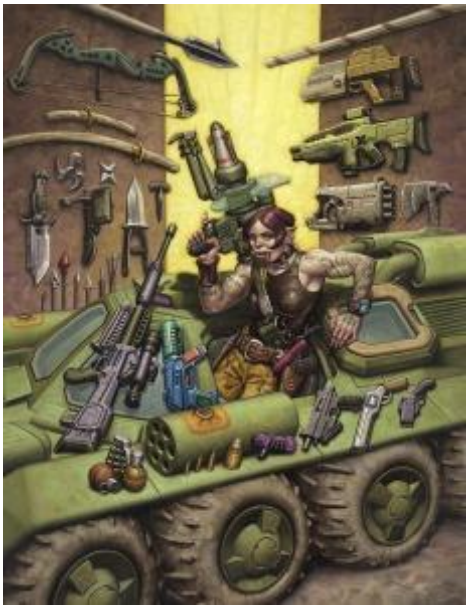
Before I tackle classes and skills, I feel there's something much more important to look at for any sci-fi setting: guns. Combat, and so guns and other weapons are going to be a big part of any campaign, and I'm not sure 5e is the best system for dealing with them. Please bear in mind that I have absolutely no real-world experience, I'm basing this on movies, games, and so on. I also have no real-world experience of a longsword, but I don't tend to worry about that either.



I got what you need… ['Guns' by Mark Zug]

Bang Bang You're Dead

As history as shown, guns tend to make other weapons obsolete. So if you're making an RPG set in the modern day or the future, you need a way of dealing with guns. But this causes some issues for a the d&d mechanics:

- Guns are deadly. I've never been shot, but I hear it's pretty bad. It makes sense for the average pistol to be at least as damaging as a longbow – 1d8 (the example in the DMG suggests 1d10). And this is just for a common pistol! What about a shotgun? Or a rifle? Rocket launcher?
- Guns are easy to use. I've never fired one, but I get the feeling you could become reasonably competent without years of training. Hence I'd give at least handgun proficiency to just about all classes.
    - A lot of guns are also one-handed weapons (yes, I know a proper firing position uses two hands, no-one cares).
- Guns are ranged weapons (pretty certain of this one). Hence they'll use Dex for attack rolls. Should you allow a player to add their dex modifier too? Allow sneak attack damage?

All together, this makes guns the obvious choice for just about all characters. And that means every character is going to prioritise dexterity, dump strength, and hide behind something until they've shot everyone dead. That's fine, and realistic (if that's what

you're going for), but it isn't what I want from the game. A character who wants to punch people should be as effective as a sneaky sniper.

My solution: introduce bullet-proof armour. Shadowrun always included armour as a way of reducing damage, so let's go with that. I'll divide firearm damage into 'small' 'medium' and 'large' and make armours differently resistant to each. Melee damage is unaffected by the resistance (but still has to beat AC as normal).

Armour

This is my current list of potential armours. It's a work in progress, I'm still unsure about several of the values, but hopefully it gives you an idea of what I'm going for. Each has a standard armour class, and many also have a damage resistance to a particular calibre of firearm.

Type	AC	DR (calibre)	Stealth	Price
Light Armour				
Leather Jacket	11 + Dex	-	-	Cheap
'Studded' Leather	12 + Dex	-	-	Pricey
Microweave Clothes	11 + Dex	3 (small)	-	Ridiculous
Medium Armour				
RentaCop Body Armour	12 + Dex (max 2)	5 (small)	Disadvantage	Fairly Cheap
Motorcycle Armour	13 + Dex (max 2)	-	-	Cheap
Infantry Body Armour	14 + Dex (max 2)	5 (small) 3 (medium)	Disadvantage	Pricey
Assassin suit	14 + Dex (max 2)	3 (small)	-	Very Pricey
Corporate Security Armour	15 + Dex (max 2)	5 (small) 5 (medium)	Disadvantage	Ridiculous
Heavy Armour				
Gang Plate	14	3 (small)	Disadvantage	Cheap
Bomb Disposal Armour	16	5 (small) 5 (medium)	Disadvantage	Very Pricey
Private Military Armour	16	8 (small) 5 (medium)	Disadvantage	Ridiculous
Power Armour	18	Total (small) 8 (medium)	Disadvantage	Priceless

Damage resistance simply subtracts that value from each shot, e.g. DR5(small) subtracts 5 damage from each shot that hits from a small calibre weapon.

Name	Damage	Clip Size	Strength Req.	Range (ft)	Calibre	Notes
Side Arms						
Stubby Gun	1d6	4	8	30/60	small	light
RentaCop Pistol	1d8	12	10	60/120	small	light
Revolver	1d10	6	13	60/120	small	
Laser Pistol	1d6	-	8	60/120	small	light
Machine Pistol	1d8	15	13	60/120	small	1xshot, or 3xshot with disadv.
Taser	-	1	8	20	-	Special
Proper Guns						
Uzi	1d8	30	14	60/120	small	1xshot, or 5xshot with disadv.
Rifle	1d10	5	12	120/240	medium	
Shotgun	1d12	6	15	30 60	medium small	No range disadv.
Assault Rifle	1d10	15	15	120/240	medium	1xshot, or 3xshot with disadv
Big Guns						
Machine Gun	1d10	30	16	120/240	medium	5xshot, special
Sniper Rifle	2d8	8	14	300/600	large	
NRG Blaster	2d10	4	16	30/60	large	
Grenade Launcher	-	6	16	60	-	special
Explosives						
Grenade	3d6 + 1d6 15ft sphere	-	-	20+(5xStrMod)	-	
Flash Bang	-	-	-	20+(5xStrMod)	-	special
Phosphorous Grenade	1d6 for 1d6 rounds	-	-	20+(5xStrMod)	-	

Note that the 'prices' are meant as a guide. A fancy suit of armour should something to aspire to.

I find players will generally buy the best armour they can afford (obviously), so it makes sense to have large gulfs in the cost or availability of different types.

Guns and Grenades

To match the armour, here are my suggested stats for guns, of different types and calibres. Again, I'm not certain about the actual values, they may need to be tweaked.

A fairly good spread of weapons. I'm sure there could be more!

Hopefully most of it is self-explanatory. The range functions just as for other ranged weapons – you can use it up to its first range normally and up to its second with disadvantage.

Several Weapons allow you to make more attacks, but with disadvantage. My feeling is not to allow this at long ranges, i.e. you don't take double disadvantage (because there's no such thing) you just miss.

Special Rules

Taser: on a hit, target must make a DC15 Con save, or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Shotgun: due to the spread of the shot, a shotgun doesn't suffer from disadvantage at long range (>30ft). Instead the shot is just downgraded to small calibre.

Machine Gun: this heavy, cumbersome weapon requires an action to setup before it can be used. Once setup it cannot be moved, and requires another action to breakdown.

Grenade Launcher: fires any of the explosive weapons. A player may use their bonus action to change ammunition types.

Explosive Weapons: may be thrown or launched. Do not roll to hit target creature, instead roll to hit target 'square'. Any square in range is AC10. A miss scatters the grenade 1d4 squares (direction random or DM's decision). May 'bounce' of surfaces (to get around corners, past line of sight, etc), +2AC for each bounce.

This all assumes you're using a 5ft square grid. If not change square to hexes, or just '5ft area'.

Flash Bang: as for taser, but to all creatures within 15ft sphere.

How Do I Shot Gun?

So I've had to introduce a few new mechanics in terms of damage resistance and calibre, but hopefully that doesn't increase the complexity of the game too much. There are a few more points to clarify:

- Old weapons: pretty much use the normal d&d weapons on top of the these guns. Probably phase out a few (unless a player really wants to use one). When was the last time anyone used a trident?
- Proficiencies: any class with simple weapons will also get handguns, martial will also get 'proper' guns. Big guns are going to be reserved for special cases, e.g. certain fighter archetypes may get proficiency with 1-2 big guns.
- Reload: you may use a gun until you've fired all the bullets in a clip, then it takes an action to reload. If you have multiple attacks you may use one attack to reload instead. Again I might introduce feats or features that allow the use of bonus actions instead (a rogue's fast hands for example).
- Burst fire: several weapons can fire multiple times for one action, each shot is resolved as a separate attack roll.
- To hit: guns use Dex for attack rolls, and you add your Dex modifier to the damage as normal. However, I might introduce a few body/gun modifications so that not everyone needs a high Dex.

Something along the lines of a targeting system, so that your attack roll is simply 2+proficiency bonus or whatever.

- Strength: all guns have a minimum strength requirement. This is just to stop a wizard taking a level dip of fighter, and then murdering everyone with an assault rifle. Again, there might be ways around this, such by buying a shiny new pair of robot arms, or a reinforced spine.
- Sneak attack: as damage resistance is *per shot* the majority of sneak attack damage is unaffected. This is intentional.

- **Cover: I can see it becoming a bigger deal in fights with lots of ranged weapons. The rules in the PHB are probably sufficient, but I would add some extras. I'd say a creature behind cover who attacks reduces the cover, e.g. total to 3/4, 3/4 to 1/2, etc. A creature can attack without breaking cover (poke the weapon out without looking), but takes disadvantage on attack rolls. I'd also say that some medium or large calibre weapons may pierce cover, depending on the material.**

I think I've covered everything I wanted to (longest post so far!). Next time I'll look at some of the classes, and if they need tweaking to fit a Shadowrun setting.